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WORKING CLASS TIMES

Volume 1
Issue 1

WHERE DO WE STAND?

We keep hearing how much the world has changed, how fast everything is changing.

Regardless of how true this is, one thing of paramount importance for us working class people hasn't changed since our history began.

We still have no control over any of the things that really affect the quality of our lives.

***This is* because we are members of a class of people dominated by another class of people.**

The other class is the middle class - not individual members of it, or a section of it, but the middle class as a whole - and it is they who run everything.

The whole of this issue of WORKING CLASS TIMES is devoted to showing that this is the true situation, and that we working class people must at last do something to change it. Future issues will discuss the problems involved in changing it, leading eventually to programmes of action.

No zombies

The fact that the middle class run everything does not mean that we've all become docile zombies blindly accepting our position and never doing anything about it. Far from it.

Every day, all sorts of things happen that show many working class people are pissed off and angry with it and that, in or out of work, ways and means are found to resist it.

Despite their efforts to stop us, we still manage to make life more bearable, even occasionally having a really good time - better still when it's at their expense. And we do have our own art, leisure, music - indeed a rich vibrant culture, often surpassing the decaying crap the middle class flaunt as culture.

Nevertheless, we still have to face the fact that we really have no control over the things that most determine the quality of our lives.

- We have no control over work
- We have no control over political parties
- We have no control over benefits or health care
- We have no control over education
- We have no control over the media
- We have no control over our housing
- We have no control over industries
- We have no control over the armed forces, the police, or the judiciary.

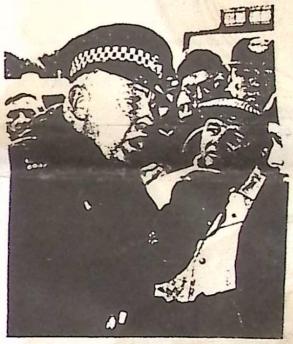
All the aces

Middle class people run all these things, though they don't all have the same amount of control. There is a hierarchy - a graded structure like a suit of playing cards. Each card is superior to those below it and inferior to those above it. Every society in history that had a dominant minority had a hierarchical structure throughout.

So some middle class people have more control than others, but collectively they run everything. Granted, there are always a few insignificant working class gits who either hope or try to become middle class, or even think they've made it. But they are irrelevant to our case.

The Real Enemy

Our purpose here is to show how we working class people can only start action to break the middle class stranglehold by first recognising them for what they truly are - the real enemy!



Let's be in no doubt that action to break the stranglehold is revolutionary, involving struggle and confrontation with the enemy. The so-called revolutionary left (the various Trotskyists, Marxists,

The corrupt role of the double-dealing Morris and the TGWU in the 18 month "unofficial" strike of 500 dockers fighting for their jobs in Liverpool has been, for them, a bitter experience of all that we say here.

To take only one example: Morris, when speaking to the strikers in Liverpool, said "There can be no turning back and no backsliding until victory is won". Three weeks later in London he told the dockers' committee that it was the end of the road - they must abandon the principle of getting their jobs back.

It is a great encouragement to all working class people that, despite all the odds, they and their families fight bravely on.

Liverpool Dockers know the score...

...and so does Robbie

Liverpool striker Robbie Fowler after scoring his second goal in the 3-0 European Cup win against Bergen reveals a T-shirt bearing a "support the dockers" slogan. Robbie and team-mate Steve McManaman have been making financial donations to the dockers' fighting fund.

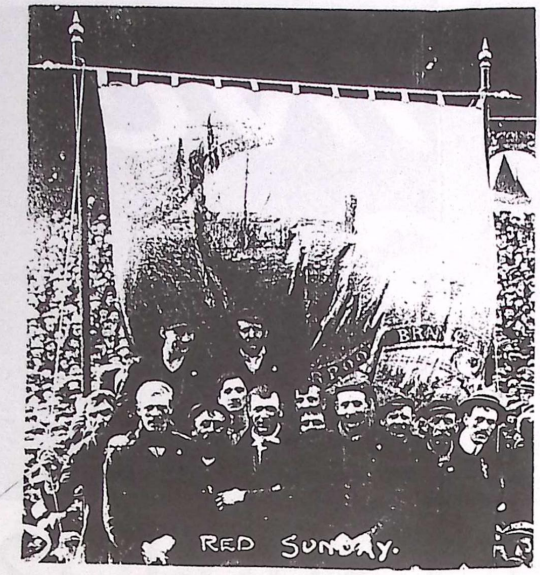
or Anarchists) have for generations told us (still do!) that our real enemy is either an economic system, Capitalism (see box), or a class of people separate from the middle class who they call the Ruling Class, the Capitalist Class, or the Boss Class. They never attempt to define this Ruling Class etc., or say who they are.

And there are very good reasons why they don't. The first is obvious something that doesn't exist can't be defined. The second is that since all such parties and groups are run by middle class people, to name their class as the enemy would create insurmountable problems for them, as well as some real personality disorders - as indeed it already does for some of the less dishonest among them.

This deception by the "revolutionary left" has seriously polluted their general politics, thus contributing to confusion and apathy among working class activists and, consequently, among working class people in general. This in turn has meant continu suffering, and the brut' h that we are today no controlling our lives, no nearer to freedom, than we ever were.

CAPITALISM

This economic system was created by the middle class for their financial benefit while, at same time, g them to n their domination of us. We shall dispense with it when we dispense with the class of people who run it.



PART OF THE UNION

In the workplace the managements/owners of firms producing something for profit (and maximum profits is always their main concern) make all the decisions. They decide what is to be done, where, who to employ to do it, how, when, at what speed, and how much to pay.

They decide on the design of the places where it's to be done, and they lay down the conditions - hours, safety, hygiene, etc. Virtually all these decision-makers are middle class. A number of workers do recognise this.

Hamstrung

It will no doubt be said that the unions are there to represent our interests and counter our exploitation by managements and owners. There might even still be some union officials (even some members) who continue to say that's what they're trying to do despite all the evidence that their efforts are completely hamstrung by the union management. But these few do not, cannot, change the role of the trade unions.

The unions' managements (hierarchically organised of course) jealously guard their role which is, at best, to act as mediators between workers and workplace managements.

They have their own particular interests at heart which are to maintain their privileged, well-paid positions, and these rarely if ever correspond to the interests of the workers they are supposed to represent.

Indeed, their actions often coincide more with the wishes and interests of the employers. Many of the unions' rulebooks openly underpin this. Read them, and you'll find that there are far more rules about how the member must behave and what s/he must and must not do, plus the provisions for disciplining those who don't conform, as opposed to the relatively small number of sections concerned with members' rights within the union.

Dissipating discontent

Sometimes, union leaderships and company managements agree on the necessity for a strike. In fact, sociologists (all middle class, of course) have often advised managements to arrange or provoke strikes (obviously, when they feel certain to win) either to beat workers they think are getting too "cocky" and show them who's boss, or to "effectively dissipate discontent".

In all cases they take every precaution to ensure that the union leadership remains in control.

Strikes led by the union have rightly been called "ritualised manipulation" since they change nothing of any significance concerning workers' exploitation.

But workers don't by any means always just sit back and take being manipulated. One of the biggest threats to the role of both union and employers' managements is the so-called unofficial strike where workers themselves decide to fight without the restraints of union control, and despite getting no strike pay.

Leaders 4 Tory Law

Another example of collusion was when union leaderships fell over themselves in their eagerness to support the government's introduction of laws to stop so-called "secondary picketing" - where workers crossed the union and industrial boundaries so ardently maintained by the various bosses on both sides, and went to help their mates on strike. Clearly, there's no limit to what the middle class controllers of industries and unions will do in trying to stamp out working class solidarity action.

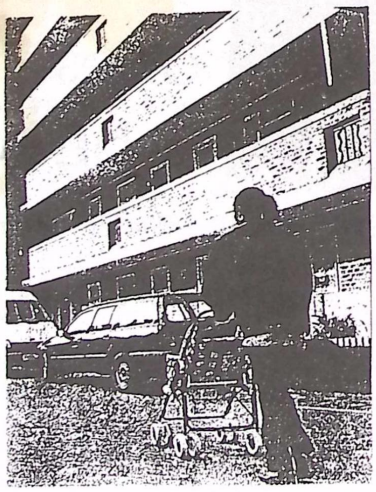
It's also clear that, like the Labour Party, trade union leaderships and many of the officials are not "traitors", they do not "betray" their working class members, because their objectives are clear and consistent.

They are self-serving careerists acting in their own particular interests. Their main loyalty and allegiance is to the middle class.

WE'RE NOT SAYING...

...that we should have nothing to do with unions – membership has some advantages, and is a means of keeping in touch with our workmates.

But we hope people will see that union managements (from the highly paid General Secretaries down to branch officials) are in fact their enemies, for they are in collusion with the employers and managements. And they not only have no intention of doing anything *to help working class people take* control from the dominant class, they do all they can to block any action which could lead in that direction.



"...we working class people can only start action to break the middle class stranglehold by first recognising them for what they truly are – the real enemy!"

"Vote For Us!"

All governments of the last 150 years have been composed of middle class people.

There's nothing mysterious about this. The parliamentary system was invented by them for their own ends. Parties are organised so that every candidate put forward for election to parliament has to have the approval of those who run the party. All parties are managed and controlled by middle class people. The Labour Party has been run by such people from the beginning.

A party for who?

This used to be a problem for the Labour leaders - how to disguise the contradiction of a "party for the working class" run by middle class people; how to disguise the true nature and role of the Labour Party.

Today the problem no longer exists. So who runs the party and who benefits most when it forms a government is clear.

Unsurprising

The unsurprising fact that the vast majority of Labour MPs are middle class leads to the equally unsurprising fact that, like the union managements, not a single one of them has the slightest intention of ending the dominated status of working class people - on the contrary.

So a vote for any party or any individual is always a vote for their hypocritical, corrupt political system. At the general election, no matter who you vote for, the middle class government always gets in.

Welfare in a State

Following WWII, there was a real revolutionary mood throughout Europe among those who, as usual, had suffered most: the working class.

The middle class were shitting themselves, and pressed their representatives to restrain the working class. In Britain it was the *Labour Party that was able to do the "restraining".*

This was easier for them because many working class people still believed the propaganda that Labour was a "socialist" party concerned with their well-being.

New "owners", old story

So in the election of July 1945, the Labour Party got a big majority and set about nationalising key industries on the brink of collapse, such as coal, steel, gas, electricity, and transport.

For workers in these industries, things got worse. Private owners (richly compensated!) may have gone, but the same middle class management remained and became more ruthless in their exploitation of the workers.

They were fully backed by the Labour Government who sent in troops to break up strikes and imprisoned scores of strikers.

Working class people saw they were being made to suffer while the middle class clawed in the high profits of a massive reconstruction programme.

Whose welfare?

To dampen down working class militancy, the middle class Labour Government set up the Welfare State - a more comprehensive health and social security system.

The middle class welcomed it, not only because it acted as a sop to *undermine working class militancy*, and not only because they particularly benefited from it, but also because they believed a healthier working class would be better able to do the reconstruction work so very profitable for them. The same motives lay *behind the social security system.*

Whittled away

But as the middle class has become more confident in their efforts to keep the working class down, the Welfare State has been whittled away. Charges have been introduced, hospitals closed, beds and services cut. "Benefits" have been eliminated or reduced - for example, millions of state pensioners, always on the poverty line, now get even less in real terms.

And all of this - its introduction, the running of it, and its rundown - is the result of decisions made by middle class people. We have had no say in any of it.

"Education" – Teaching Class

For the first 5 years of most working class children's lives it is the parents who mould them to conform and obey "authority". They often unconsciously instil in their children middle class views and attitudes, including the lie of middle class "superiority", concepts they got from their own parents, their schooling, the media.

This conditioning is then studiously taken over by the teachers who apply the Education System.

Knowing Your Place

This system was set up and is run by middle class people. They decide how working class children are to be kept in line, their aim the production of a working class that "knows its place".

They design the curriculum - it's subjects, how they must be taught, how much time is given to each. They design assessments, tests and exams - examinations in middle- classness that operate as filters, so the few working class kids who slip through do so strictly on their terms. The system actively discourages working class children from thinking about how and why society is run the way it is.

"Meritocracy"

This doesn't just encourage but actually teaches working class children to believe that everything worthwhile and praiseworthy is the work of "superior" people: that the middle class are "superior" and it is therefore right that they should be in control.

Some working class kids reject all this - some rebel against it. Many thousands a year are excluded from this so-called "education". Teachers and the rest of the education authorities pretend incomprehension about why this rebellion occurs. Schools and teachers are attacked, but the rebellion is often against the wrong target - the victims' own class.

DIY pay rise

In July 1996 MPs voted themselves a pay increase. The Prime Minister got a 70% increase to £143,000 a year; Leader of Her Majesty's Most Loyal Opposition 48% to £98,000; and backbench MPs 26% to £43,000 - over £826 per week.

They get many thousands extra as parliamentary advisers to firms ranging from the multi-billion pounds arms dealing industry to the multi-billion drugs industry, through directorships, lavish allowances, lavish pensions, and 17 weeks of official Commons holidays.

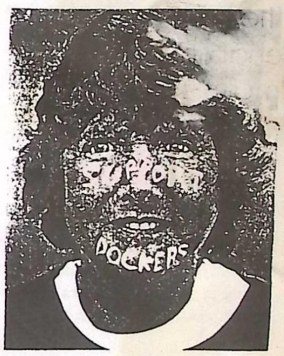
No wonder there are over 100 applicants for every vacancy.

To justify this mass of spoils, MPs said the pay must be high "to attract the right calibre of people", adding that "if you pay people peanuts, you get monkeys."

According to the Low Pay Unit's "conservative estimate", there are some 9 million working class "monkeys" labouring for an income which, after deductions (tax, national insurance, travel to workplace etc.), amounts to the official poverty line or below. The government assesses a poverty line income to be equivalent to that from Income Support.

We don't know the exact number of working class people in this country who are living on or below the official poverty line, but we do know that it's appreciably more than 15 million.

'This used to be a problem for the Labour leaders – how to disguise the contradiction of 'a party for the working class' run by middle class people'



Multi Media – same owners

The newspapers and magazines we read are controlled and written by middle class people.

The "Freedom of the Press" we hear so much about is nothing more than the freedom of these people to run the Press in their way for their ends - to increase their wealth and to propagate their views, their ideas, their "culture", to reinforce and sustain their dominant position in society.

Running Auntie

The people who run the BBC, and all those who own and run the television companies, are middle class. The TV programmes working class people watch are produced and presented by middle class people.

Television is a particularly effective weapon in the battle to condition us to see ourselves, society, and the world through their eyes - the eyes of the dominant class. We are led to believe what they strive to believe themselves - that they are superior to us.

The same is true of radio, and of local TV and radio, training grounds for the national networks. Hence the grovelling toadies we see and hear locally.

Their Forces

All who run the three armed forces, from the Minister of Defence down to the 2nd lieutenants, are middle class.

We don't get the slightest say in how they're run, what they're used for, or the multi-billion pound expenditure on them.

They are their forces. Only they decide to use them, and for their aims only - sometimes to suppress actions we take to defend ourselves from their attacks; sometimes to defend or advance their economic and political power over middle classes in other countries. It's then we see the terrible situation of working class people killing each other on their behalf.

Not only was it the decisions of middle class people in pursuit of their own class interests that caused millions of working class people to be massacred in two world wars, but it is their decisions alone that have led to millions of our people suffering greater degrees of ill health, and dying in greater numbers at a much younger age than the middle class.

The Thick Blue Line

When Sir Robert Peel brought in the Police Act in 1829 it was enthusiastically supported by the middle class, to protect their power and wealth from the likes of us. They know we're not stupid. If we get the chance, we take back a little of the wealth they make out of us.

The police today (uniformed, Special Branch, MI5 etc.) play the same role.

They complain of being understaffed, yet the "thin blue line" proves to be remarkably thick (in more ways than one) when working class people take defensive action, such as the anti-Poll Tax campaign, or the miners' fight against pit closures. Then they swarm around like angry hornets - but more vicious.

It could not be otherwise. Since middle class people set up all the agencies of the police, all who run them are of the same class.

The Judiciary (judges, magistrates, barristers, solicitors) are of the same class. So you know what "justice" to expect from them.

Imprisoned

The main role of the prison authorities, as with the police, is to control the working class.

No accident then that near 99% of the people in prison are working class, banged up in barbarously overcrowded and antiquated buildings, and a considerable number of them not "guilty" of any "crime".

Most are inside for some sort of "theft", the total amount of which is minute compared to the astronomical amounts the middle class make out of us, as well as the billions of pounds they thieve in City frauds and insider dealings alone. Yet you'd be lucky to find even one of these real villains in nick. And the tiny few who do get caught are treated with kid gloves, and are let out on the basis of outright lies long before their original release time.

But generally no serious attempt is made to catch them. That's not the role of the police.

For example...

Ernest Saunders, Chairman of Guinness on a salary of several thousand pounds a week, was convicted of illegal share dealings connected with his company's £2.7 billion take-over of Distillers and sentenced to five years. He appealed, and his classfellows, the Appeal Court judges, halved his sentence. After only a few months in Ford Open Prison, with duly deferential treatment and priveleges, the prison doctor diagnosed him as having Alzheimer's Disease, for which there is no known cure, and he was released.

Then - a miracle! Saunders was suddenly cured and back in a lucrative business as well as getting a £75,000 a year pension from Guinness.

Homes Fit For...?

Housing for us working class people was never good, often very bad – badly designed, badly built, and badly maintained.

All our housing was/is designed by middle class architects for handsome fees, and built by workers for wages which are minuscule compared to the vast profits and salaries of the middle class people who run the building firms. We are never asked what sort of housing we need.

Wrong to buy

Some people fell for the corrupt "buy-your-council-house" campaign - a middle class strategy that not only made things worse for poorer people by reducing the number of houses to let, but also had political objectives. They believed that working class people with the halter of mortgage repayments around their necks would be less likely to cause trouble through disputes and strikes. They also sought to undermine feelings of community on council estates by creating divisions between those buying and those who either saw through the con or just couldn't afford it - divide and rule being a constant objective.

Street life

Over a million of us are homeless, either a) in that we have literally nowhere to live, or b) effectively, through living overcrowded in crappy little houses or rooms, or with relatives, friends or others. Thousands of homeless families, all working class, are living in the cramped, unhealthy and often dangerous conditions of bed-and-breakfast - paid for by local authorities to the middle class owners of run-down hotels in the "business" to make as big a profit as possible.

How much longer?

We have gone to some length to draw attention to a few facts, not merely because they are true though never before clearly expressed, but because full awareness of them is vital if we are to change the situation where, despite our decades of struggle, we still have no say in any of the things that most affect our lives.

Middle class crimes against us are many. One of the most ruthless is their concealment of working class history - our history - through the education system and beyond.

That the middle class are so fucking boring is the least of their defects. They have a pathological need to think themselves superior to excuse the endless catalogue of vile practices they have pursued to suppress and oppress working class people. This alone shows the depth of their degeneracy and moral decadence.

The First Step

Middle class people have all the say. Control of everything is in their hands, not those of non-existent phantoms like "The Ruling Class".

It is certain that we can free ourselves, that we can beat the middle class.

We have the strength and the ability to do it. But recognition of the real enemy is the essential first step! If we don't know precisely who our enemy is, we stand no chance of defeating them.

All that is rotten in our society, and the rest of the world, can only be understood when seen in terms of class. Class crosses all boundaries. Prejudices and conflicts of race, colour, sex, or sexual preference are among the many ways created and nurtured by the middle class to divide and weaken us to ensure their dominance over us. Racism is born in their propaganda about their "natural superiority" - the basic dogma of the Nazis and all other fascists.

Do something NOW!

If you broadly agree that recognition of our true enemy is THE ESSENTIAL FIRST STEP, get in touch with us now to become part of a network.

All will be put in contact with each other so that there can be correspondence, news of significant local activities, exchange of ideas to change our situation. Eventually we can get together for joint discussion at a place to be agreed.

So right away put your name and address in the box below and post it to WORKING CLASS TIMES, Box No. 1076, Bristol BS99 1WF or Box no. 3241, Saltley, Birmingham B8 3DP.

I Agree broadly with what you've said so put my name and address into the network.

Name.....

Address.....

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